United Nations S/PV.3857

Security Council

Fifty-third Year

Provisional

3857th Meeting

Thursday, 26 February 1998, 4.25 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Dangue Réwaka	(Gabon)
Members:	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Amorim
	China	Mr. Cui Tiankai
	Costa Rica	Mr. Berrocal Soto
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Gambia	Mr. Sallah
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Portugal	Mr. Soares
	Russian Federation	Mr. Sergeev
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

98-85082 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 4.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

The President (*interpretation from French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Sierra Leone, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Jonah (Sierra Leone) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1998/155, which contains the text of a letter dated 20 February 1998 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls its resolution 1132 (1997) of 8 October 1997, and the statements of its President of 27 May 1997 (S/PRST/1997/29), 11 July 1997 (S/PRST/1997/36) and 6 August 1997 (S/PRST/1997/42), following the military *coup d'état* in Sierra Leone on 25 May 1997. It expresses its deep regret at the violence, loss of life and property and immense suffering undergone by the people of Sierra Leone since the coup. It remains gravely concerned at the continued violence in the country and calls for an urgent end to the fighting.

"The Security Council welcomes the fact that the rule of the military junta has been brought to an end, and stresses the imperative need for the immediate restoration of the democratically elected Government of President Tejan Kabbah and a return to constitutional order, in accordance with paragraph 1 of its resolution 1132 (1997).

"The Security Council encourages the earliest possible return to Freetown by President Kabbah and looks forward to his re-establishing a functioning and autonomous government in the country.

"The Security Council expresses its readiness to terminate the measures imposed by paragraphs 5 and 6 of its resolution 1132 (1997) as soon as the conditions referred to in paragraph 1 of that resolution have been fulfilled.

"The Security Council commends the important role that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has continued to play towards the peaceful resolution of this crisis. The Security Council encourages the Military Observer Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG) to proceed in its efforts to foster peace and stability in Sierra Leone, in accordance with relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. It underlines the need for close cooperation between the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone, ECOWAS, and in particular its Committee of Five Foreign Ministers on Sierra Leone, ECOMOG commanders, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General and his staff, United Nations agencies and relevant international organizations in their work, and specifically on the development of a plan for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration into civilian life of all combatants in Sierra Leone. In this context, it supports the intention of the Secretary-General, subject to security conditions on the ground, to take rapid steps towards the reopening of the United Nations Liaison Office in Freetown in order to support the activities of his Special Envoy and in particular to assist national reconciliation and political dialogue.

"The Security Council expresses the view that the Conakry Agreement (S/1997/824, Annexes I and II) and the Abidjan Agreement (S/1996/1034) provide important elements for a framework for peace, stability and national reconciliation in Sierra Leone. It calls upon all parties in Sierra Leone to work towards these objectives through peaceful

means and political dialogue. In this regard, it condemns all reprisal killings and related violence in Sierra Leone and calls for an immediate end to such acts.

"The Security Council looks forward to detailed proposals by the Secretary-General concerning the role of the United Nations and its future presence in Sierra Leone. It requests the Secretary-General to establish a Trust Fund to support such activities and calls on all Member States to make early contributions to it.

"The Security Council welcomes the interim report of the Inter-Agency Assessment Mission to Sierra Leone of 10 February 1998 (S/1998/155) and commends those Member States and international organizations who have provided urgent humanitarian assistance to Sierra Leone. It remains deeply concerned about the serious and fragile humanitarian situation in the country, and calls upon all States and international organizations to provide further urgent assistance to Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries affected by the crisis. It calls on ECOMOG and all those concerned to ensure safe and unrestricted access to those in need.

"The Security Council expresses its concern about the safety of all humanitarian personnel in Sierra Leone, and condemns the taking of hostages by former members of the deposed junta. It calls for the immediate release of all international personnel and others who have been detained or held hostage. It commends ECOMOG for its efforts to liberate those individuals being held against their will.

"The Security Council will remain seized of this matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1998/5.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.